

VZCZCXRO7968  
PP RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHNEH  
DE RUEHNE #0249/01 0420149  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 110149Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5328  
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1535  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4290  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3521  
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0250  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1928  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5780  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2376  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9314  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 3344  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5925  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7599  
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 NEW DELHI 000249

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NP, AC, PM

STATE FOR INR/MR

STATE FOR SCA/INS, PM/CBM, PM/PRO

STATE FOR SCA/PPD, PA/RRU

STATE FOR AID/APRE-A

USDOC FOR 4530/IEP/ANESA/OSA FOR BILL MURPHY

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PAKISTAN/A.Q. KHAN, JOE BIDEN  
EUROPE VISIT, KYRGYZSTAN/AMERICA, AFGHANISTAN,  
IRAQ/AFGHANISTAN; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media  
reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press.  
The Mission reports on English-language media via email  
through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

-----  
PAKISTAN/A.Q. KHAN  
-----

¶01. "NUCLEAR OBSTINACY," editorial in the February 9  
DAINIK HINDUSTAN Hindi daily: "Nuclear proliferation and  
terrorism are two important elements of Pakistan's  
foreign policy with which it holds India and the rest of  
the world to ransom. Pakistan has set free its rogue  
nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan just a few days before the  
arrival of special representative Richard Holbrooke. By  
doing this Pakistan has cocked a snook at the U.S. Khan  
is accused of passing sensitive nuclear technology to  
nations such as Iran, Libya and North Korea, and he  
himself has acknowledged it. One of the reasons he may  
have been set free is that he is extremely popular in the  
country. Also by freeing him, Pakistan has swept a  
possible IAEA investigation under the carpet. This is  
nuclear obstinacy. "

¶02. "HAS PAKISTAN'S HERO KHAN'S CHAPTER ENDED OR HAS IT  
JUST BEGUN?" editorial in the February 10, 2009 Mumbai-  
based right-of-center Gujarati daily MUMBAI SAMACHAR.  
"Just when the countdown has begun for Pakistan to submit  
its response to the Indian dossier on the 11/26 Mumbai

attacks, an incident has occurred that makes Pakistan's role all the more uglier [in its commitment to fight terrorism]. The acquittal of A Q Khan, disgraced nuclear scientist and the father of a 'dirty bomb,' by a Pakistani court has raised eyebrows in the international community... This is also a grim reminder of Pakistan's notoriety in making false promises in reigning in rogue elements on its soil... Now the grave concern before the global community is what will be the repercussions of Khan's release? This is also an open challenge to America whose pressure had kept the noose tightened around Khan until now."

-----  
JOE BIDEN EUROPE VISIT  
-----

103. "CHANGING AMERICA" editorial in the February 10, 2009, Mumbai edition of left-of-center Marathi daily MAHARASHTRA TIMES. "President Barack Obama's heavy reliance on peace and reconciliation is welcome and it manifests itself in U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden's maiden overseas visit to Europe. Biden's foreign policy statements have struck the right chord in America's relations around the world. Biden made a point to reiterate the president's pledge to extend an open hand to any nation (including Iran and Russia) that unclenched a fist. Biden promised more openness with Russia regarding proposed missile defense facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic. He acknowledged that it would not

NEW DELHI 00000249 002 OF 004

be possible for the U.S. and Russia to agree on everything, but hastened to add that the United States and Russia can disagree and still work together. He added that the U.S. would continue with its plans for a missile defense shield in Central Europe. He proposed a shared fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban with Russia as part of an era of improved relations between Washington and Moscow. Biden was also clear in the context of Iran. He said the U.S. is willing to talk to Iran only if Iran makes a clear choice -- either continue with the current course or abandon the illicit nuclear program and support meaningful incentives. He has made it amply clear that the US would not back away from the use of force when all else fails..."

-----  
KYRGYZSTAN/AMERICA  
-----

104. "DETERRENT JUSTICE OF QURBAN ALI BAIG", editorial in the February 7 right-of-center Urdu daily HAMARA SAMAJ, New Delhi: "If we have an overview of the present leaders of the Islamic world, we come to a conclusion that the political canvas & strategic moves of these leaders hinge around the interests of America & the Jewish lobby. They seem to have forgotten that the interests of the people of their countries are getting jeopardized in the process, for which they shall face the wrath sometime in the future. Paying due respect to the sentiments of the people, Kyrgyzstan, a country situated in West Asia has declared its intention to shut down the current American air base on its soil. The present political leadership in the country headed by President Qurban Ali Baig has marked its approval over the decision. The decision to shut American air bases in Kyrgyzstan shall indeed prove to be a gigantic blow to the Obama administration, since United States had declared to send 30 thousand more troops in Afghanistan recently."

-----  
AFGHANISTAN  
-----

105. "TOUGH CHALLENGE FOR U.S. SPECIAL ENVOY," op-ed in

the February 9 DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily by foreign affairs columnist Vinay Kaura: "Afghanistan is one of Barack Obama's stated foreign policy priorities. But Obama will find it tough to deal with this humongous Afghanistan problem that he has inherited. Special representative Richard Holbrooke is leaving for Pakistan and Afghanistan shortly, and soon thereafter Hillary Clinton will make a trip to Asia. They will have to decide how best to tackle the Taliban. Deploying an additional 30,000 troops in Afghanistan is no solution - finishing the Taliban's stranglehold over Afghanistan is. Holbrooke will also have to decide if the U.S. wants to continue banking on President Hamid karzai in the next elections. Karzai's government has earned a bad name due to alleged corruption and Karzai holds control only over one-third of the country. The Pakistani Army will try to

NEW DELHI 00000249 003 OF 004

explain to Holbrooke that the Afghanistan and Kashmir issues are interlinked. Hope Holbrooke can see through this game plan and does not get hoodwinked."

¶06. "TARGETS OF OBAMA IN AFGHANISTAN", editorial in the February 7 right-of-center Urdu daily HINDUSTAN EXPRESS, New Delhi: "In the present circumstances the fire & fury unleashed by America over Pakistan, al Qaeda & the Taliban is certainly not unnatural. A prominent reason is that America has not been able to make much hold over the Pathan community in Afghanistan to turn them into loyalists for quelling the Taliban. America thus has not been able to get a similar success as in Iraq because of a dearth of people who could dance to the American tunes & get influenced by its tactics. It was much less than what America had believed it would achieve in Afghanistan. More the American fighter planes have bombed & targeted the civilian population in Afghanistan, determination of the Afghans has grown manifold while their ire against the Americans has crossed all limits. In the course of events, it is widely expected that America is going to provide more firepower to its oppressive onslaught in Afghanistan in view of the rebellious stance of the common populace there."

¶07. "NO FAITH IN KARZAI?" editorial in the February 10 CPI(M) Bengali organ GANASHAKTI in Kolkata. "The U.S.-led NATO troops in Afghanistan...are now themselves being heckled by the Taliban. President Obama is worried to see NATO in such a state. In this situation, America is no longer inclined to attach so much importance on Karzai as before, and will start building direct contact with tribal leaders, instead. The Afghan administration has become corrupt. So, Washington is compelled to explore an alternative way of advancing its objectives. The Taliban's activities have increased to such an extent that they can strike Kabul any moment. America believes it will have to compromise with tribal leaders if it wants to maintain its position in Afghanistan. There is no other option open for the U.S. But will America survive even that way?"

-----  
IRAQ/AFGHANISTAN  
-----

¶08. "WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ, EMPHASIS ON AFGHANISTAN", editorial in February 7 Islamist Urdu bi-weekly DAWAT, New Delhi: "The new American president has declared to withdraw itself from the Iraqi swamp; however, on the other hand he has talked of more emphasis on Afghanistan, which seems to be going astray after a sufficient control was achieved there. It is being increasingly predicted that the American & NATO forces in America shall have to face a defeat. So far, six hundred & forty four American soldiers have been killed in the country. The present brewing situation in Afghanistan is far more precarious & volatile than it was in 2001. That is precisely why

America intends to withdraw itself from Iraq & focus entirely on Afghanistan. During the course of attacks in

NEW DELHI 00000249 004 OF 004

Iraq, permanent American air bases have come up in the region. Now it is the turn of Afghanistan, from where America desires to keep many other countries on its radar. The erstwhile American president attacked Iraq & exerted his supremacy over the region. The remaining task in the region around Afghanistan is being sought to be fulfilled by his successor."

MULFORD